



DATE: October 18, 2014
TO: Bellevue Transportation Commission
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SUBJECT: Downtown Transportation Plan Implementation + Exceptional Light Rail Station Access

INTRODUCTION

On October 7, 2013, the Transportation Commission submitted its recommendation for the Downtown Transportation Plan (DTP) to the City Council. Council then directed staff to implement the Commission's recommendation through amendments to the Downtown Subarea Plan and through capital projects. The Commission has prepared transportation-related policy amendments to the Downtown Subarea Plan that will be considered in the context of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. The Downtown Livability Initiative (DLI) may also provide policy recommendations based on the work on the DLI Citizen Advisory Committee.

This memo and the presentation on October 23, 2014 will provide an overview of the current DTP capital projects, as well as a report on planning for Exceptional Light Rail Station Access for the Downtown Transit Center Station.

Downtown Capital Projects

Several projects are currently funded through a 2013-2014 budget allocation for Early Implementation of the Downtown Transportation Plan (CIP-PW-R-176). With this funding, several small but significant capital projects are underway that will make it easier for pedestrians and bicyclists to get around in Downtown Bellevue:

- 108th Avenue NE @ Main Street: This project will install a green bike lane on the southbound approach to the intersection to help separate southbound bicyclists from right-turning traffic. At this location, bicycles and buses are allowed to proceed southbound while all other traffic must turn either right or left onto Main Street. A median extension and landscaping are also included in this project to enhance this southern gateway to Downtown.
- 108th Avenue NE @ NE 4th Street: The Commission included this intersection as one that warrants "Enhanced" pedestrian facilities. Staff has prepared a preliminary design that includes wider curb ramps and crosswalks, landscaping, wayfinding and weather protection. Property owners on each of the corners have participated with staff and the

Bellevue Downtown Association in discussions and site visits, and are in support of the preliminary design concepts. A site survey is in process and final design will follow.

- 112th Avenue NE @ NE 8th Street: The City Council has awarded a contract to install a northbound bicycle lane on 112th Avenue NE through the NE 8th Street intersection. This will be accomplished by slightly narrowing the existing travel lanes. This intersection has been identified by bicyclists as being particularly uncomfortable due to the volume and speed of traffic. Through striping and signing, this project will provide dedicated space for bicyclists to navigate this busy intersection.
- NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor west of 108th Avenue NE: Immediately west of the Bellevue Transit Center is a section of the Pedestrian Corridor with a steep and narrow ramp sometimes referred to as a “Cattle Chute”. To improve accessibility and visibility, the ramp will be widened and lengthened, and lighting will be upgraded. This will be an interim improvement until the property to the south redevelops and provides full Pedestrian Corridor improvements, as required by the Land Use Code.

Exceptional Light Rail Station Access

Separate from but associated with the Downtown Transportation Plan is a Council-initiated effort to ensure that the Downtown community has exceptional pedestrian and bicycle access to the Downtown Transit Center light rail station. The Transportation Commission provided early guidance for this work by identifying “Enhanced” and “Exceptional” crosswalk locations, mid-block crossings, and Transit Center upgrades and bicycle access. A consultant team from SvR Design Company worked with staff to develop design strategies for pedestrian and bicycle access near the planned station and created a design “toolbox” of components - curb ramps, wayfinding, weather protection, etc - that could be applied in the context of the particular crosswalk or mid-block crossing location. Planning level cost estimates for design components are also provided to help with project scoping and budgeting.

NEXT STEPS

The above capital projects will move through design toward construction within the next several months. They represent incremental improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle environment at locations that will make a big difference for Downtown mobility.

Pending the outcome of the 2015-2016 budget process, resources may become available to implement some of the pedestrian and bicycle station access projects.